

# Pedestrian Safety Talking Points

This list of pedestrian safety talking points is a useful tool for making presentations to community groups and organizations. It explains the effects of motor vehicle crashes on pedestrian safety and provides statistics regarding pedestrian safety. Use the quote, charts, and diagrams at the end of the talking point list to make transparency overheads to show during your presentation.

- “Pedestrians are nearly twice as likely to be killed by a stranger with a car, than by a stranger with a gun.”  
Environmental Working Group/Surface Transportation Policy Project (*Overhead #1*)
- According to the 1995 Nationwide Personal Transportation Survey, there are approximately 56 million walking trips that take place every day in the United States. Family and personal business accounts for 43 percent of these walking trips, with another 34 percent for social and recreational purposes. Fourteen percent of walking trips involve travel to school or religious activities, while only 7 percent of these trips involves commuting to work. Walking is the second most used mode of travel, so it's clear that at one point in time everyone is a pedestrian.
- In 1996, there were 5,412 pedestrians killed, and 82,000 pedestrians injured, in traffic crashes. On average, a pedestrian is injured in a traffic crash every 6 minutes and killed in a traffic crash every 97 minutes. (Traffic Safety Facts, 1996)
- In 1996, most pedestrian fatalities occurred in urban areas (71 percent), at nonintersection locations (77 percent), in normal weather conditions (88 percent), and at night (65 percent). (*Overhead #2*)
- Pedestrian injuries represent the second largest category of motor vehicle-related deaths.
- Target Group: Children/Youth  
In 1996, of the 812 traffic fatalities for children (ages 5 to 9), 254 (almost one-third) were pedestrian fatalities. (*Overhead #3*)  
Almost half (43 percent) of the 715 pedestrian fatalities under age 16 were killed in crashes that occurred between 4 p.m. and 8 p.m.

- Target Group: Older Adults (ages 70 and over)  
Older adults account for 18 percent of all pedestrian fatalities and 2 percent of all pedestrian injuries. The fatality rate for this group, both males and females, was 3.9 per 100,000 population — higher than for any other age group.
- Target Group: Impaired Pedestrians  
Alcohol involvement, either for the driver or for the pedestrian, was reported in 47 percent of the traffic crashes that resulted in pedestrian fatalities. Of the pedestrian fatalities, 32.3 percent were intoxicated with a blood alcohol concentration (BAC) of 0.10 grams per deciliter (g/dl) or greater. The intoxication rate for the drivers involved was 12 percent — less than half of that for the pedestrians. In 5.3 percent of the crashes, both the driver and the pedestrian were intoxicated.

In 1996, the highest rate of intoxication for pedestrians killed in traffic crashes was reported for pedestrians 25 to 34 years old. Intoxication rates by age groups were as follows (*Overhead #4*):

16 to 20 years, 34.5 percent  
21 to 24 years, 45.5 percent  
25 to 34 years, 55 percent  
35 to 44 years, 50.7 percent  
45 to 54 years, 39.7 percent  
55 to 64 years, 30.4 percent  
65 years and older, 11.1 percent

- Increasing pedestrian and motorist awareness of pedestrian safety issues is the key to reducing the problem of pedestrian motor vehicle-related deaths.
- Engineering, education, and enforcement are all important tools for traffic safety professionals. None of them alone is a cure-all, but together they can bring about significant safety improvements for pedestrians and motorists. (*Overhead #5*)



**Engineering:** The first step to creating a safer environment for pedestrians and motorists is to change the fundamental perception of roadways as solely the motorist's domain. Our transportation system emphasizes private motor vehicles often at the expense of pedestrians and other users. It is important, then, to consider pedestrians' needs as a part of routine planning, not something that is tacked on as an afterthought. Appropriate lighting, signing, striping, and intersection design can all be used to reduce dangers to pedestrians.

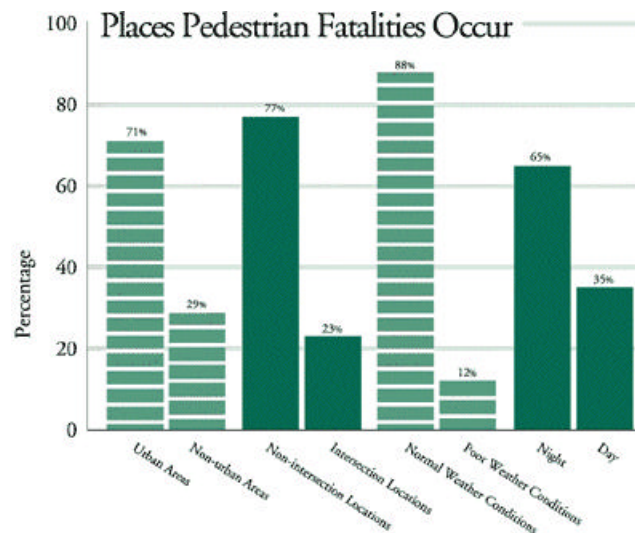
**Education:** Education for all road users helps ensure safe travel habits and awareness about the needs of pedestrians. Successful pedestrian safety programs often take a two-pronged approach: educating traffic and civic professionals, and educating the public. It is also important for any educational outreach effort to consider the driver's perspective without minimizing pedestrians' needs and rights.

**Enforcement:** Effective enforcement includes citing pedestrians and motorists who violate traffic laws. States can take steps to encourage pedestrian enforcement at the local level, as well as examine codes and practices that may discourage walking (i.e., not providing sidewalks). However, much of what can be done about enforcement and regulation of pedestrian actions occurs at the local level. Areas with high concentrations of pedestrian infractions and pedestrian-related motor vehicle crashes should be targeted for high enforcement. In many cases, revisions of local traffic rules or consideration of new laws are needed to promote and encourage safer pedestrian activities.

*"Pedestrians are nearly twice as likely to be killed by a stranger with a car, than by a stranger with a gun."*

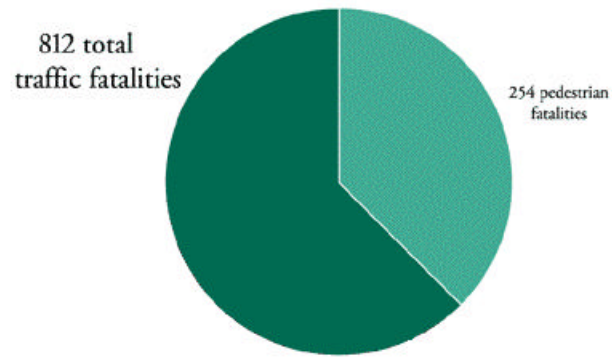
– Environmental Working Group  
Surface Transportation Policy Project

Overhead #1

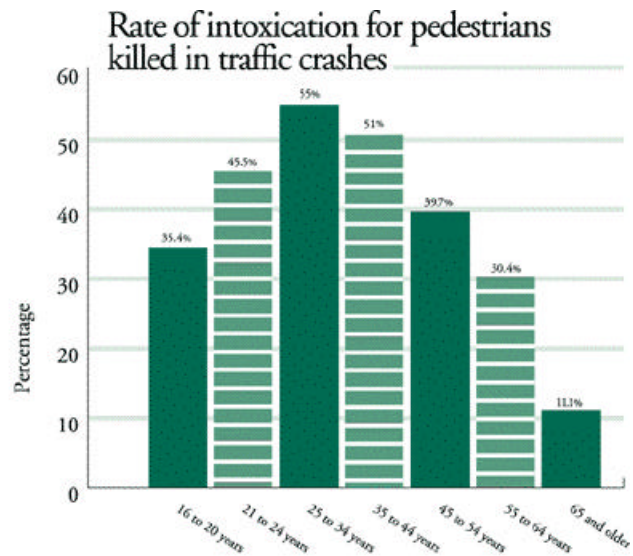


Overhead #2

## Children (ages 5-9) Killed in Traffic Crashes



Overhead #3



Overhead #4

*Creating a safer environment with  
the “3E’s”*

Engineering – environment

Education – awareness

Enforcement – pedestrians & motorists

Overhead #5

